

The Commonwealth.

E. E. HILLIARD, - - - Editor.
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MR. BRYAN'S POSITION.

If there ever was a time in the history of American politics when the "so-many-men-so-many-opinions" idea prevailed it must be to-day. Already there have been thousands of opinions expressed as to Mr. Bryan's refusal to accept the nomination of the Populists at St. Louis last week. His position was firm and positive that he would not accept the nomination unless Sewall should be nominated for Vice-President.

Gen. J. B. Weaver put it in its true light, as we see it, when he declared before the Populist convention that "No man could have done less and be a man." Said Gen. Weaver further, "His manly attitude concerning the action of this convention, we must all respect, and every member of it, and every one who reads the proceedings of this convention must do the same."

Mr. Bryan's position is of peculiar interest; but the situation is even more interesting as it regards the Vice-President.

THE COMMONWEALTH believes that the Populist convention ought to have taken Gen. Weaver's advice and nominated Bryan and Sewall. This would have made the victory for silver almost a certainty and it would have done away with all friction as to the second place on the ticket.

As it is Bryan and Sewall will receive the entire vote of silver Democrats, a strong vote of silver Republicans, and also a considerable vote of the Populists.

But perhaps the Populists will, for the most part, vote for Bryan and Watson. This will make confusion as to the Vice-President. The contest for the first place being between two and for the second place amongst three candidates, makes the situation quite an interesting one. There is no way of forecasting now what will be the development before the election in November. We believe that many Populists will disregard the St. Louis nomination and vote for Bryan and Sewall.

WHY NOT HAVE IT?

Notwithstanding the great political excitement of the hour, and notwithstanding the fact that men at such times give the most of their thought to these burning questions, THE COMMONWEALTH wishes to talk business to Scotland Neck a little. There is a fitness of things that has been fixed by the powers and laws of nature; and it is the part of wisdom to regard such fitness. For two or three generations the farmers of this community have been raising cotton, and their lands produce the staple as well now as they did fifty years ago. There is no probability that this section will cease to raise cotton for a generation or two to come, no matter what the price may be. If it should be a high price they will raise larger quantities, and if it should be a low price they will raise it anyway. The cotton farmer will not pass out in this section for a long time to come.

Now to the business view: The most business-like thing that Scotland Neck people have ever done would be the building and operating of a cotton seed oil mill. The cotton is raised here and large quantities of seed are sold and shipped away every year. This ought not to be. If there is any profit in the business the community that furnishes the material is entitled to it.

Then why not operate an oil mill here? Who will go about establishing it?

THAT FINAL "N"

The article on final "N" which we reprint from the Charlotte Observer closes with a little tinge of sarcasm and sounds a little "giddy," but we print it for its unique calculation on the letter "N," or as the author puts it, for its "letterology."

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NATIONAL POPULIST CONVENTION.

The National Populist convention was in session in St. Louis last week. It met on Wednesday and adjourned late Saturday afternoon.

For some time the Populists have subordinated almost everything else for which they have been asking and which they have been demanding to the cause of free silver.

The Democratic party having declared for free silver and nominated a free silver ticket, the whole country was on the tip-toe of expectation and suspense guessing whether or not the Populists would endorse Bryan and Sewall, the nominees of the Democratic party. There was considerable division amongst the Populists on the subject. The middle-of-the-road men, mostly the Southern Populists, preferred to nominate a straight ticket of their own regardless of what the Democrats had done; but the Western Populists wished to endorse Bryan and Sewall outright and let the Democrats and Populists combine and make a straight fight for silver with practically no other issue.

All this made the convention one of great interest to the country generally. The Populists were watching with great eagerness because they considered that there were two possible results to them. If the convention should endorse the nomination of Bryan and Sewall it might be a means of disrupting and disbanding them as a party; but it would almost certainly insure the election of a silver President.

The question with many of them, was whether they would prefer to have their party go to pieces and gain a victory for free silver, or maintain their party organization and lose a silver victory. Whether or not there was so much involved in the endorsement of Bryan and Sewall, many of the Populists thought so.

The Republicans were watching the convention with almost breathless interest because they felt almost assured that an endorsement of Bryan by the Populists would be a defeat for McKinley. The Democrats were watching also with great interest because they felt that if the Populists should fail to endorse Bryan and Sewall it would mean a sure victory for the Republicans. For these reasons the Populist convention was the political cynosure of the nation. And right or wrong, pleasant or unpleasant to the two great parties, Democratic and Republican, the Populist party held the balance of power as to the silver issue.

And now that the convention has heard all the new "boy orators," gone through with all the patent gyrations for national conventions, which patents the Republicans and Democrats used freely before the Populists, the result of the work done is such that it leaves the situation quite interesting.

THE COMMONWEALTH cannot give any detailed account of the convention, only the footing up. Senator Marion Butler was made temporary chairman and delivered a ringing speech, which was so ambiguous that the convention could not tell whether he was for or against endorsing Democratic nominees. All the same Butler was a politician at St. Louis as well as in North Carolina, and he was warmly congratulated by some of the leading men in the Populist party.

Senator Allen of Nebraska was made permanent chairman, and he being a strong Bryan man, this gave a hope to the Bryan element of the convention that amounted almost to a solid certainty of his endorsement.

There was considerable opposition to Sewall, the Democratic nominee for Vice-President, mainly because the Populist platform condemned national banks and Sewall is president of a bank. Another circumstance which made him objectionable to the Populists, was the prevailing opinion that he is rich, and many of the Populists seem to think that to call a man rich is the same thing as calling him a gold man.

The convention reversed the usual order of such occasions and nominated for Vice-President first. The nomination went to Tom Watson of Georgia. Mr. Bryan's manager, Senator Jones, wired whether or not he would accept the nomination by the Populists for President if Sewall was not also nominated. Mr. Bryan was prompt in replying that under no circumstances would he accept the nomination by the Populists unless they endorsed Sewall. In the face of this information, which had been read by perhaps every mem-

ber of the convention, they endorsed Mr. Bryan with a most enthusiastic vote. When the ballot was taken the result showed 1,042 for Bryan and 321 for S. F. Norton of Chicago.

There was great demonstration and wild enthusiasm for Bryan and silver. The National Silver Party convention was held in St. Louis at the same time of the Populist convention and nominated Bryan and Sewall by acclamation. They were enthusiastic in their support of the Democratic nominees.

FREE COINAGE 16 TO 1.

Some of the readers of THE COMMONWEALTH have recently asked us what is meant by the "free coinage of silver 16 to 1."

Briefly as we understand it, it is this:

The coinage of silver bullion into money by the Government free of charge. That is to say, take your silver bullion to the mints and the Government will coin it into money without making any charge for it, just as gold is coined now. The Government charges nothing for coining gold now except for the copper alloy that is put in to make the metal hard enough to use. The meaning, then, of free silver, is that those who have the bullion can get it made into money by the Government free of cost.

The meaning of 16 to 1, as we understand it, is that a dollar in silver must have sixteen times as much silver in it as a gold dollar has of gold. This is the ratio of purchasing power between the two metals, as construed by those who favor the free coinage of silver.

THE SANCTIFICATION CRAZE.

Evangelist Crumpler has been doing some very strange work in Goldsboro, Clinton and Dunn. We printed last week an account of his meetings, taken from the Sampson Democrat.

It turns out now that a number of persons have had their minds unsettled by this "sanctification" craze and have been sent to the insane asylum at Raleigh for treatment. As many as six persons have been sent to the asylum as a result of the excitement which came upon them in the Crumpler meetings.

Now, THE COMMONWEALTH would never throw a feather's weight in the way of any one who is trying to do good, unless the effort to do good should become over-balanced with evil. In this case it does seem that the evil attendant upon the sanctification meetings which have stirred up the people in the sections named, over-balance the good. It is a sad and serious matter for people to become so excited over anything as to cause them to lose their minds.

We rejoice in good wherever we see it, and we believe in enthusiasm; but we think there is such a thing as senseless fanaticism.

OUR RAILROAD PROPERTY.

The Wilmington Star of 23rd published the following interesting special of railroad statistics:

"The railway commission has completed its assessments of the valuation of railway property in this State. The figures compiled from the report furnish interesting reading.

"The total valuation of the miscellaneous roads in this State, including rolling stock and depots, \$5,775,545. The grand total valuation of all roads in the State is \$26,316,320. The total mileage is 3,700 miles. The valuation of Pullman cars is \$38,982.

"The valuation of telegraph property in the State is as follows: Western Union, \$182,252; Postal Telegraph, \$29,586; miscellaneous telegraph lines, \$4,400.

"The valuation of steamboat property in the State is \$278,780.

"The grand total valuation of all property under the jurisdiction of the commission is \$26,895,321. This is an increase of \$1,810,773 over last year's valuation. The revenue from the increase is sufficient to pay the expenses of the commission for two more years.

"The increase in mileage of railways in the State is eighty-four miles. The valuation of the Wilmington, New Bern & Norfolk railroad is \$3,500 per mile.

"The valuation of Southern Railway property in this State by the Railway Commission is \$8,399,230, an increase of \$1,361,966. The valuation of the Seaboard is \$5,295,195, an increase of \$172,282 over last year. The valuation of the Coast Line is \$6,252,349, an increase of \$198,923. The Wilmington, Columbia & Augusta is valued at ten thousand per mile, as is the Wilmington & Weldon.

"The Hamlet-Wilmington division of the Carolina Central is valued at \$4,500 per mile."

BRYAN'S SCHOOLMATE.

WITCHITA, Kas.,—Joseph H. McKnight, a prominent business man of this city, whose congratulatory telegram was the first to be placed in the hands of the Democratic nominee, was a schoolmate of Bryan, and has many interesting reminiscences of "The Boy Orator of the Platte." To a correspondent he said:

"Yes, I know the nominee well, I attended school with him at Jacksonville, Ill. Not only this, but Mr. Bryan's wife, who was then Mary Baird, attended the same school as did also my wife. We were always together and notwithstanding the fact that we differed politically, there was always the friendliest feeling between us.

"I have at my house one of his visiting cards which he gave me when he first came to school. It reads 'William Bryan, Salem, Ill.' I wouldn't take a good sum for that card and other souvenirs of our school days.

"Bryan was always a leader in the debating societies. He was by far the best debater who attended school, and when sides were chosen he was always the first chosen. He took all the prizes offered at school and was a general favorite on account of his excellent scholarship. There was not a more studious scholar at the school than Willie Bryan. I think he was about 15 years old when he first came to school and on account of his hard study he took his place among the larger scholars.

"Almost all the boys who went to school were Republicans, and we used to pity Bryan because he was a Democrat. He could talk with any of us on politics, and there was never a time that Bryan did not take care of himself. The people used to say that if that boy could get right politically he might obtain some good position. That was the only thing against him, and outside of politics he was a general favorite. He was a farmer's boy, and I remember that when his father died it made it pretty hard for him to finish his education, but he always said he was determined to have an education if he had to work all day and attend school at night. He had the pluck, was determined to win and did win.

"His wife was one of his greatest admirers. She was at the head of her class, as Bryan was at the head of his. They both graduated at the same time and were the valedictorians of their respective classes.

"Bryan determined to take up a law course, and his wife did the same thing. In his practice her counsel has greatly aided him, as it always did at school. Both were exemplary scholars.

"He became intimated with his wife at an early age, and a couple whose likes and dislikes more nearly agreed I never knew. I never knew Bryan to smoke, chew or drink, and as to the use of vulgar language, it was not used by him under any circumstances."

BEAUTIFUL MARRIAGE AT WELDON.

Correspondence to THE COMMONWEALTH.
WELDON, N. C., July 29, 1896.
On Tuesday evening at 9.30 Grace Episcopal church was brilliantly lighted up and beautifully decorated for the marriage of Miss Kate Long, one of Weldon's fair daughters, to Mr. Edward Benedict Episcopal minister of Weldon. The ceremony was performed by Rt. Rev. J. P. Cheshire and Dr. M. Marshall, of Raleigh. At 10 o'clock the bridal party arrived. Miss Mabel Zollicoffer with a master touch played "Lohengrin"—bridal chorus, which was beautifully sung by the choir and as the music was being rendered the ushers, N. M. Cohen and W. B. Tillery, were seen to march slowly up the aisle and stand on the right and left of chancel followed on the left by the bride, dressed in cream silk and orange blossoms, leaning on the arm of her sister Miss Emily Long, maid of honor, on the right side of chancel by the groom with his best man, Rev. Mr. Horne, of Oxford. At the altar they were met by Rt. Rev. Mr. Cheshire and Dr. Marshall, who united them in marriage in a beautiful and impressive manner, Judge T. N. Hill, of Halifax giving the bride away. After the ceremony was performed and as the party marched out of church, the hymn, "The Voice That Breathes O'er Eden Fair" was beautifully rendered by the choir.

They were given a reception at the residence of Mr. A. Prescott from 10 to 12 o'clock and after receiving congratulations and partaking of refreshments the party was driven to the depot to take the Northbound train for a six weeks' trip North. They will visit New York, Canada, Nova Scotia and other places of importance.

Visitors from abroad were: Dr. and Mrs. Benedict, New York; Miss Lizzie Fessenden, New York; Mrs. M. A. Hamilton, Baltimore; Mr. B. A. Badger, Raleigh; Mr. Frank Haywood, Raleigh; Miss Ruth Moore, Northampton; Mrs. W. R. Bond, Scotland Neck.

Visiting ministers present were: Rt. Rev. Mr. Cheshire, Rev. M. M. Marshall, Rev. M. Walker, Raleigh; Rev. Mr. Ingle, Henderson; Rev. Mr. Horne, Oxford; Rev. Mr. Branson, Warrenton; Rev. Mr. Hoffman, Tarboro; Rev. Mr. Battle, Rocky Mount; Rev. Mr. Smith, Scotland Neck.

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MISS LENA H. SMITH,

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